

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 783

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 3345

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: 25TH PARTY CONGRESS: CHERENKO AWARDS MAY INDICATE
PROMOTION

1. K.U. CHERNENKO, CHIEF OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WAS SINGLED OUT MARCH 2 AND 3 FOR SPECIAL
RECOGNITION WITH AN UKAZ OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE USSR
SUPREME SOVIET AWARDING HIM THE TITLE HERO OF SOCIALIST
LABOR WITH AN ORDER OF LENIN AND THE HAMMER AND SICKLE
GOLD MEDAL, ALL FOR HIS "GREAT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT."

2. NEWS OF THE AWARD WAS CARRIED ON THE VREMYA TELEVISION
PROGRAM MARCH 2 AND IN PRAVDA AND OTHER CENTRAL NEWSPAPERS
MARCH 3. CHERNENKO IS THE ONLY HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL
TO RECEIVE A PUBLIC AWARD SINCE THE CONGRESS BEGAN. HE
HAS BEEN CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH BREZHNEV THROUGHOUT HIS
CAREER (WHEN BREZHNEV WAS FIRST SECRETARY OF MOLDAVIA,
PRESIDENT OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET AND
GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CPSU).

3. COMMENT. WE SUSPECT THAT THIS AWARD MAY INDICATE
CHERNENKO'S IMPENDING PROMOTION, PERHAPS TO THE SECRETARIAT
OR EVEN CONCEIVABLY TO THE POLITBURO.

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